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## And They Were There

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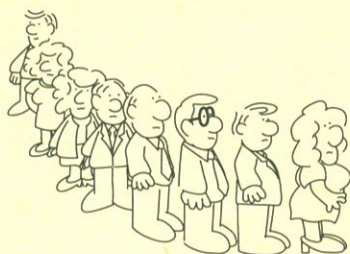
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### THE BUSINESS OF ACQUISITIONS 1991 by Joyce L. Ogburn

The third ALCTS Business of Acquisitions Institute was held in Boston at Emmanuel College on June 6-7, 1991. These institutes are meant to convey some basic understanding of the complex function of acquiring materials for libraries to beginning acquisitions librarians or professionals with other backgrounds now responsible for acquisitions activities at some level. Like its predecessors, this institute was very successful in meeting its goals.

The institute was structured around sessions (panels, lectures, discussions) for the entire group, combined with focus sessions for small groups. Attendees were given choice of focus sessions in which to participate. This combination permitted practical, personalized interaction that accompanies a small group and broader discussions that tend to occur in large groups. A gathering in the form of a reception at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts provided for more informal communication between the faculty, planners, and attendees.

The large sessions covered topics of publishing, bookselling, automation, and ethics. The information delivered at these sessions was useful to all acquisitions librarians, regardless of their years of experience. The ethics discussion was framed around case studies, which proved a productive approach to exploring the slippery ground of ethical behavior.

The focus sessions included managing finances, approval plans, serials vendor selection and evaluation, media and software purchasing, Asian acquisitions, Latin American acquisitions, serials management, out of print and replacement ordering, firm order, competitive procurement, and monograph

vendor selection and evaluation. Each participant was allowed to attend five of the eleven.

As one can expect, the quality of the instruction in the focus sessions varied. It is very difficult to find knowledgeable and talented faculty for every topic. This problem will face every institute planning committee, since they must select among practitioners whose teaching experience is probably limited. The committee gives guidelines to all faculty, but really don't control the content of their sessions. Overall the evaluations highly rated the faculty and course content.

Lively opening and closing speeches highlighted the institute. **Karen Muller**, in delivering the opening remarks, provided the framework for the institute by providing statistics and quotable quotes about libraries and publishing. **Carol Chamberlain** wrapped up the institute with quotes from the participants and with thoughts for all to take away and ponder.

The institute included a notebook which served as a guide to the sessions, and also served in lieu of handouts. Included were resources for further reading and a draft of a serials glossary produced by the ALCTS Serials Section Acquisitions Committee. Notebooks are valuable in that they give the participant something to take away in a semi-permanent and organized form.

Despite the intention to serve a local audience, the institute attracted participants from across the country. This occurred at the other institutes as well. The participants' years of experience varied from none (students) to more than ten. It was suggested that some old timers attend in order to have their knowledge reinforced and vindicated, rather than to glean new information. Also, some folks attend when an institute is in their area, since the chance won't occur again for some time.

# AND THEY WERE THERE

Edited by **Julia Gelfand** (University of California, Irvine) and  
**Sever Bordeianu** (University of New Mexico)

The next institute is tentatively planned for Richmond, VA in May 1993. Discussion is under way to attempt in the future to locate the institute near library schools. The Boston location and the proximity of Emmanuel College to Simmons gave students the opportunity to attend. The planning committee is also discussing the possibility of developing a core curriculum which would serve as the basis for future institutes.

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### NEGOTIATING SERVICES AND FEES WITH SUBSCRIPTION AGENCIES by Katina Strauch

Negotiating Services and Fees With Subscription Agencies was held June 28, 1991, in Atlanta, Georgia. It's the Buzzy Basch seminar and I had a chance to attend so I flew to Atlanta early Friday morning before ALA and encountered a room full of about thirty people — librarians, publishers and vendors. The atmosphere was informal and friendly.

The Negotiating Services and Fees with Subscription Agencies seminar centered around the library subscription market, sales, profit, and marketing by US subscription agencies, calculation of service fees by subscription agents, and ways to negotiate with these agents in order to maximize service and minimize fees. The seminar was very valuable and was chock full of valuable information. Basch's longtime work in the area of serials management came through in his practical advice to his audience. Of special use were the handouts and outline which were distributed to the participants. This printed material was full of basic and not-so-basic information. I found that I knew some of it, but had never taken the time to look at it all in the detail we did during the seminar. Looking at the information in such detail gave me a new sense of understanding which I can bring to the relationship with my serials vendors.



I recommend this seminar as well as the How-to-do-it manual for librarians *Buying Serials* by N. Bernard Basch and Judy McQueen (New York: Neal-Schuman, 1990).

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**SSP 1991 TOP MANAGEMENT  
ROUNDTABLE, BOSTON,  
MASS., OCTOBER 3-4, 1991**  
by **Katina Strauch**

I always enjoy going to a Society for Scholarly Publishing meeting and this one was no exception. It concerned the scholarly communication system and how it is working, has worked, and will work. The audience of under 100 was composed of publishers (profit and non-profit), librarians, and quite a few scholars. I took a lot of notes, so I'll try to hit some of the high spots.

The program was organized by **Christine Lamb** (Little Brown) and **Fred Spilhaus** (American Geophysical Union). Lamb set the stage by saying that she was skeptical about the future of scholarly publishing and that she had a love/hate relationship with new technology. And the new technology was definitely the thrust of the meeting.

There was a lot of talk about electronic journals, and **Dr. Edward J. Huth**, the former editor of *Annals of Internal Medicine* and the new editor of the *Online Journal of Current Clinical Trials*, was there to speak along with other electronic journal editors.

The main speaker was **Eric Almquist**, General Manager of Decision Research Corporation, who spoke about a study his company had done for the Faxon Institute in 1990. Almquist presented results of a survey encompassing a group of 680 chemists, geneticists, and computer scientists to learn about their information behavior — i.e., how they accessed or encountered information, termed the “information encounter.” For librarians, it was interesting to note that those surveyed used libraries infrequently, but found

libraries very useful when they did. Those surveyed were also asked about “information guilt,” i.e., how much information which they felt that they did not read but which was necessary in order to perform their job. Apparently, the Faxon Institute plans to make this information available for a fee (no fee was set at the time of the meeting) and may make this an ongoing series of reports. It was all fascinating and I for one hope that they continue to do this and that they make these surveys available to the library community.

Two speakers stand out in my mind (there were many good speakers, mind you and this not meant to imply otherwise, but two speakers really stand out in my mind). The first was **Jennifer Leaning**, an M.D., and Editor-in-Chief of *The PSR Quarterly* (an electronic publica-

developing methods for handling all of the data which is being produced. Leaning finished by imploring the audience to ... “create a world we dream about rather than reacting to the world that happens.”

**James R. Wallis**, from the IBM Research Laboratory, created quite a stir among the audience when he said that he did not use journals. He only uses preprints which are sent around among researchers. Wallis contended that he only consults journals when he needs to cite articles. Wallis outlined the cancelling of journals in the IBM Library and stated further that there will be no library in five years. Though most of those present may not have agreed with Wallis, he nonetheless represents a body of intense researchers out there who must be listened to.

**Library Managers Want to Know...**

**Buzzy Basch** reports that the burning questions among library managers and serialists attending his seminars on negotiating services and fees with subscription agencies include:

- How do subscription agencies calculate service charges?
- What can we do to reduce the service charges on our account?
- How much are other libraries paying?
- Why are there variations among the prices different agencies charge for the same publication?
- When do agencies pay publishers?
- Do agencies negotiate with publishers?
- How can we influence an agency to change the representative assigned to our account?
- How do agencies process claims?
- Is it possible to claim direct from publishers?
- Where can we find sample bid specifications?
- How can we reduce the impact of changing agents?

The next seminar is scheduled for San Antonio on 23 January 1992. For information, contact (312) 787-6885.

Other speakers included **Joel Baron** (Faxon), **Robert Shirrell** (University of Chicago Press), **Dara Entekhabi** (MIT, Department of Engineering), **Martha O'Meara** (Harvard Graduate School of Design), **Pat Sabosik** (CHOICE Magazine), **Karen Hunter** (Elsevier), **Robert D. Bovenschulte** (New England Journal of Medicine), **Lindsay Waters** (Har-

vard University Press), **Thomas A. Herring** (MIT, Professor of Geophysics), **C. Stephen Gillispie, Jr.** (Byrd Press), **Judy Holoviak** (President, SSP and Director of Publications at the American Geophysical Union), **Stephen S. Murray** (Harvard/Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics), and **Eugene Green** (Boston University, Professor of English).

For myself, I felt that I was seeing light at the end of the tunnel. Listening throughout the meeting, it occurred to me that the new technology will only enhance the need for the roles which both publishers and librarians play in our environment — publishers as the filters of what information is made available and librarians as the filters of access to information. Maybe we'll be around in five years after all. ☛